

Statement on the New National Space Policy

June 28, 2010

Over the past 50 years, America has led the world in space exploration, broadening humanity's horizons and our understanding of the universe. And our achievements have in turn led to incredible technological advances that have improved our lives and transformed our economy. We can point to satellites orbiting hundreds of miles overhead that can identify our location within inches or communications systems that allow information to flow around the world as never before. In part, what has made this progress possible was a commitment by our Nation to scientific discovery and technological innovation and an unyielding faith in the future, even during difficult times.

That is why each President since Dwight Eisenhower has defined a national space policy: to ensure that as we confront the pressing issues of the day, we continue to press forward in the pursuit of new frontiers. Today my administration is continuing in this tradition. We are releasing a new national space policy, designed to strengthen America's leadership in space while fostering untold rewards here on earth. For even as we continue our relentless focus on the serious challenges we face at home and abroad, our long-term success and leadership as a nation demands that we do not lose sight of the promise of the future.

Our policy reflects the ways in which our imperatives and our obligations in space have changed in recent decades. No longer are we racing against an adversary; in fact, one of our central goals is to promote peaceful cooperation and collaboration in space, which not only will ward off conflict, but will help to expand our capacity to operate in orbit and beyond. In addition, this policy recognizes that as our reliance on satellites and other space-based technologies increases, so too does our responsibility to address challenges such as debris and other hazards. No longer is space just a destination to reach; it is a place where we must be able to work in ways that are responsible, sustainable, and safe. And it is central to our security and the security of our allies, as space-based technology allows us to communicate more effectively, to operate with greater precision and clarity, and to better protect our men and women in uniform.

But, above all, this policy is about the boundless possibilities of the future. That is why we seek to spur a burgeoning commercial space industry, to rapidly increase our capabilities in space while bolstering America's competitive edge in the global economy. We are proposing improved observation of the Earth, to gain new insights into our environment and our planet. We set ambitious goals for NASA: ramping up robotic and human space exploration, with our sights set on Mars and beyond, to improve the capacity of human beings to learn and work safely beyond the Earth for extended periods of time. And this policy recognizes the importance of inspiring a new generation of young people to pursue careers in science and engineering. For, ultimately, our leadership as a nation, in this or any endeavor, will depend on them.

In short, this policy, while new, reflects the standards of leadership we have set since the dawn of the space age and ideals as old as America itself. We do not fear the future; we embrace the future. Even in times of trial, we do not turn inward; we harness the ingenuity and talents of our people, we set bold goals for our Nation, and we lead the world toward new

frontiers. That is what has ensured our prosperity in the past. And that is what will ensure our prosperity in this new century as well.

Categories: Statements by the President : National space policy.

Subjects: Education : Science and math programs; Science and technology : Global competitiveness; Science and technology : Research and development; Science and technology : Robotics; Space program : Aeronautics and Space Administration, National; Space program : Earth-based research; Space program : International cooperation; Space program : National space policy; Space program : Private sector involvement; Space program : Space exploration.

DCPD Number: DCPD201000555.